

## **CLAIMS**

### **What is claimed is:**

1. A method for collecting information from a storage server comprising:  
using an agent to scan the storage server and collecting information regarding files stored thereon; and  
using the agent to summarize the information and create a summary, and storing the summary on a database server.
2. The method of claim 1, further comprising analyzing the files and generating statistics regarding the files.
3. The method of claim 1, further comprising analyzing the files and generating a table and a histogram regarding the files.
4. The method of claim 2, wherein the statistics comprise a number of files, a size of files, and an average access time of files.
5. The method of claim 1, further comprising transferring the summary to a multi-appliance management application (MMA) before storing the summary on the database server.
6. The method of claim 3, further comprising accessing the table and the histogram using a graphical user interface (GUI).

7. The method of claim 6, wherein accessing further comprises accessing the table and the histogram over the Internet.
8. The method of claim 1, wherein collecting information comprises using a file thread to examine files and using a directory thread to examine directories.
9. A machine readable medium having stored thereon executable program code which, when executed, causes a machine to perform a method for collecting information from a storage server, the method comprising:
  - using an agent to scan the storage server and to collect information regarding files stored thereon; and
  - using the agent to summarize the information and create a summary, and storing the summary on a database server.
10. The machine readable medium of claim 9, further comprising analyzing the files and generating statistics regarding the files.
11. The machine readable medium of claim 9, further comprising analyzing the files and generating a table and a histogram regarding the files.
12. The machine readable medium of claim 10, wherein the statistics comprise a number of files, a size of files, and an average access time if files.

13. The machine readable medium of claim 9, further comprising transferring the summary to a multi-appliance management application (MMA) before storing the summary on the database server.

14. The machine readable medium of claim 9, further comprising accessing the table and the histogram using a graphical user interface (GUI).

15. The machine readable medium of claim 14, wherein accessing further comprises accessing the table and the histogram over the Internet.

16. The machine readable medium of claim 9, wherein collecting information comprises using a file thread to examine files and using a directory thread to examine directories.

17. An apparatus comprising:

a server coupled to a mass storage device;

an agent coupled to the server, the agent to scan the mass storage device and to create a summary including cumulative statistics about data on the mass storage device;  
and

a database server coupled to the server and the agent to store the summary.

18. The apparatus of claim 17, further comprising a monitor coupled to the agent and the database server to display the summary.

19. The apparatus of claim 17, wherein the server is a file server.
20. The apparatus of claim 17, wherein the server has a first file system and the agent has a second file system, the first file system is different from the second file system.
21. The apparatus of claim 17, wherein the summary includes histogram information about file system usage by file types.
22. The apparatus of claim 19, wherein the file server includes files stored in directories.
23. The apparatus of claim 22, wherein the summary includes cumulative information about the directories.
24. A method for collecting information from a file server comprising:  
using a multi-appliance monitoring application (MMA) to monitor the file server;  
using the MMA to instruct an agent to scan the file server;  
using the agent to scan the file server and to collect information regarding files stored thereon;  
using the agent to summarize the information and create a summary;  
transmitting the summary to the MMA; and  
storing the summary on a database server.

25. The method of claim 24, wherein the summary includes statistics regarding the files and the file server.
26. The method of claim 25, wherein the statistics include a number of files, a size of files, and an average access time of files.
27. The method of claim 24, wherein storing the summary further comprises storing the summary in a table.
28. The method of claim 24, wherein storing the summary further comprises storing the summary in a histogram.
29. The method of claim 24, further comprising accessing the summary using a graphical user interface (GUI).